

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Disclosed is an optical element disposed
in a container having an inside ambience independent
from an outside of the container, and rinsed by
5 irradiation with ultraviolet rays from a light source
outside the container. Also disclosed is a rinsing
method, having a first step for accommodating an
article, to be rinsed, into a second container disposed
inside a first container and being adapted to maintain
10 an ambience different from that of the first container,
a second step for introducing a rinsing gas into the
second container, and a third step for irradiating the
article with ultraviolet rays from a light source
disposed inside the first container but outside the
15 second container.